

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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R 301325Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8653

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT CAIRO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 0397

BEIRUT FOR BAGHDAD AND DAMASCUS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SA FR

SUBJ: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER VISIT TO KUWAIT

SUMMARY: JOBERT VISIT WAS LARGELY PUBLIC RELATIONS EXERCISE
TO SHOW KUWAITIS OF FRENCH INTEREST IN THE COUNTRY AND THE
REGION. ALTHOUGH ARMS, OIL AND INDUSTRIALIZATION WERE DIS-
CUSSED, NO AGREEMENTS WERE MADE AS FAR AS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO
DETERMINE. ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES
JOBERT REITERATED WELL-KNOWN FRENCH POSITIONS. KUWAITIS SEEMED
PLEASED BY VISIT, DURING WHICH FRENCH RENEWED INVITATION TO
AMIR TO VISIT PARIS, BUT OVERALL THEIR REACTION WAS RESTRAINED.
END SUMMARY

1. FROM ALL APPEARANCES FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT'S RECENT VISIT
WAS SUCCESSFUL IN LIMITED SENSE OF GIVING FRENCH EXPOSURE IN
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COUNTRY WHERE US AND BRITISH INFLUENCE STRONG. ACCORDING

FRENCH EMBASSY JOBERT'S MAIN PURPOSE WAS TO GET FIRST-HAND VIEW OF REGION AND ALSO TO SHOW FRENCH PUBLIC THAT GOF HAD DIRECT LINKS WITH IMPORTANT MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES.

2. WE ALSO TOLD BY FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE JOBERT DIDDKOT RPT NOT SEEK ANY OIL-ARMS OR OIL EXPORT DEAL. IN FACT, HE SAW TO IT THAT NO FRENCH ARMS SALESMEN WERE HERE DURING VISIT. HE DID MEET WITH MINDEF SHAIKH SAAD AS WELL AS WITH AMIR, PRIME MINISTER/CROWN PRINCE AND OTHER TOP GOK OFFICIALS INDICATING THAT ARMS AND OIL WERE AT LEAST DISCUSSED EVEN IF NO NEW AGREEMENTS WERE REACHED.

3. PRESS STRESSED INDUSTRIAL AND GENERAL ECONOMIC PROJECTS. APPARENTLY JOBERT TALKED ABOUT JOINT EUROPEAN (IE, EEC)-ARAB COOPERATION. SOMEWHAT DORMANT FRENCH-KUWAIT JOINT COMMITTEE WILL MEET NEXT MARCH TO SEE WHAT PROJECTS CAN BE UNDERTAKEN AT PRESENT. FRENCH KNOWN TO BE INTERESTED IN PETROCHEMICALS, STEEL AND REFINERY PROJECTS. ALREADY SOME HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF ORDERS HAVE BEEN PLACED BY KUWAITI FIRMS FOR TANKERS FROM LA CIOTAT SHIPYARDS, WHICH ARE PARTIALLY OWNED BY GOK (AND WHERE, WE UNDERSTAND, MANY OR MOST OF WORKERS ARE ALGERIANS).

4. ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES JOBERT TOLD KUWAITIS FRANCE HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO ATTEND FEB 11 OIL CONSUMING NATIONS CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THERE BE NO CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS. RE MIDEAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, HE SAID FRANCE'S POSITION WELL KNOWN AND EUROPEAN NATIONS HAD ROLE TO PLAY IN PEACE CONFERENCE. NEVERTHELESS, HE FELT FRANCE SHOULD NOT INTERVENE IN NEGOTIATIONS AT PRESENT STAGE WHEN THEY SEEMED TO BE PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY.

5. INVITATION TO AMIR TO VISIT PARIS WAS RENEWED.

6. COMMENT: OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT PURPOSES OF JOBERT VISIT HERE WERE FOR FRENCH FONMIN TO GET TO KNOW KUWAITI LEADERS AND TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO INDUCE KUWAITIS TO FOCUS ON FRANCE'S ROLE IN REGION. HE ALSO REMINDED KUWAIT OF FRANCE'S INTERESTS AND CAPABILITIES IN AREAS OF ARMS, OIL AND INDUSTRIAL CO-
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OPERATION. KUWAITIS SEEMED PLEASED IF SOMEWHAT RESTRAINED OVER VISIT, AND WE BELIEVE JOBERT VIEWS HIS SHORT STAY AS USEFUL AND SUCCESSFUL.
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